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A Letter to the Editor:

The 2020 Census is underway, and Troup County wants to make sure that everyone is counted. The results of the census are critical to our local and federal governments, as the failure to report an accurate population count will directly affect our representation in congress, the drawing of school districts, and community funding. The only way to ensure that Troup County's economic, educational, and congressional needs are met for the next ten years is for everyone in our community to be counted. As of July 1, 2020, only 58.1% of Troup County residents have responded to the 2020 Census; however, the Census Bureau has extended the self-response deadline to October 31, 2020, so there is still time for everyone to do their part in helping Troup County reach our goal of 100% participation.

In an effort to positively shape the future of our community, we want to inform our residents of the huge financial impact this population count has on our county. Each citizen who responds to the census helps our community gain direct access to its share of more than \$675 billion per year in federal funds. These funds support critical and essential services, including hospitals, health clinics, and healthcare services; emergency and disaster response, fire and public safety services; schools, education programs, grants, and more; roads, bridges, and other public transit and infrastructure projects; businesses and economic development; housing services; and water and waste management.

If you have yet to complete the 2020 Census, please visit <https://my2020census.gov/> or respond by phone or paper mail with details available at 2020Census.gov. It only takes about 10 minutes to complete. Remember to count everyone who lives in your home, including relatives, non-relatives, friends, and roommates. Also, be sure to count all children and babies who were born on or before April 1, 2020.

Please know that your responses to the 2020 Census can only be used to produce statistics and cannot be used against you by the FBI, the CIA, the DHS, ICE, or any other government agency or court. Your personal information and answers are confidential and protected by federal law.

If you are part of a faith based organization or any other group that is interested in encouraging Troup County residents to take part in the 2020 Census, please contact Valerie West, vwest@troupcountyga.gov, for more information.

To respond online, go to: <https://my2020census.gov/>

To respond by phone, call: 844-330-2020

Patrick Crews
Chairman, Troup County Board of Commissioners